

To borrow a macroinvertebrate sampling kit [contact your regional River Detectives coordinator](#) to make a booking and arrange pick up / delivery.

To set up your own macroinvertebrate kit you'll require;

*** Most equipment is cheap and readily available. The best net and trays come at a cost. Maybe you could apply for a grant to obtain these items ?*

- A sampling net. A specialist net with very fine mesh is recommended. A large net for use by adults can be purchased from Embrace Ecology's [Waterbug Shop](#) or you can purchase a set of smaller [student nets](#). The best samples are taken with heavy duty nets and a vigorous action so we usually use a net purchased from Westlab. They come in three components; [the frame](#), the [net itself](#) and the [extendable pole](#).
Please note we do not recommend entering the water to collect your sample so kick nets are not advised.

If on a tight budget, you can make your own scoop net with these [instructions](#) (mesh must be fine).

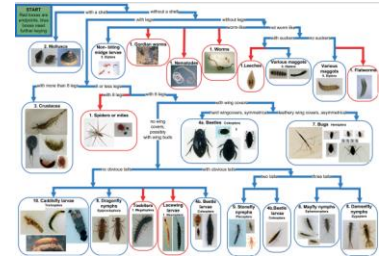
- Good heavy duty buckets with lids for holding and transporting sample water (two buckets is plenty for a class activity)
- Shallow trays (1 per 4 students works well). White trays give the best contrasting background to the bugs. They can be purchased from Embrace Ecology's [Waterbug Shop](#) or from [Westlab](#).

If on a tight budget, you can use your own shallow clear plastic tubs with laminated white paper underneath.

- White ice cube trays (1 or 2 per sorting tray works well)
- White spoons (1 per student). White is best to highlight the bugs although plastic spoons are hard to come by these days and we encourage a planet-friendlier option if possible.
- Pipettes for sucking up small bugs (not essential as spoons will do – they tend to become water pistols with students !) *We do not recommend using tweezers as you might see in some instructional videos.*
- Magnifying glasses / three-way bug viewers from your favourite educational supplier. You could also invest in traditional microscopes, USB microscopes or [macro lenses for smartphones / ipads](#) if you want to get fancy. This can help you show bugs on a big screen to the whole class / take macro photos.
- Waterbug identification charts/guides (2 per tray);
 - [Simple ID chart](#) printed at A3 size and laminated (suitable for all but particularly early childhood, primary)



- [Simple key chart](#) printed at A3 size and laminated (suitable for upper primary and secondary students)



- [Waterbug data sheet](#) (1 per student or sampling tray group) for recording bugs, calculating your score and rating the health of your waterway OR data can be put straight into the [River Detectives online portal](#) (login required).
- You may also want to purchase a large plastic tub for housing the equipment at your school.

Other *optional* waterbug identification tools;

- [Advanced key booklet](#) printed (suitable for upper secondary students and adults)
- [The Waterbug App](#) (free for your device) to use in the classroom or out in the field for keying out species digitally
- Interactive [Waterbug flip chart](#) on the River Detectives website (not all species featured).

For all other support in running a sampling sessions with students, collecting a sample, teaching/learning about waterbugs, identifying bugs see the publicly accessible [Resource River Bank tab \(Waterbug topic\)](#) of the River Detectives website www.riverdetectives.net.au

Extra resources for registered users only;

- 'The Secret Life of Waterbugs webinar' can be found at the [Let's Test and Record tab](#) (login required).
- A wonderful matrix of cross-curricular, multi-age waterbug activities can be found in the [Dive Deeper tab](#) (login required).